



mccomb
orthodontics



Does Your Child Need Braces?

Straight Answers to Your Questions

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Whether your child's dentist suggested that you see an orthodontist or you're wondering yourself if braces are in your child's future, here's a guide to clear up questions you may have so you can make the best decision for your family, with ease.

- McComb Orthodontics

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What is the Right Age for Your Child to Meet with an Orthodontist?

The American Association of Orthodontists recommends that ALL children come in for an initial consultation around age 7.

Why so young, you may be wondering, especially since if you had braces, it probably wasn't until your preteen or teen years?

In most cases, your orthodontist will tell you everything is normal and will recommend that you come in every 6 months to 1 year for follow-up visits until your child is ready for comprehensive treatment. However, in select situations early treatment is advisable (for about 1 in 5 children), even if everything appears pretty normal at first glance.

Severely crowded teeth

When one or more adult teeth are prevented from erupting into their normal position, this can actually lead to impacted adult teeth and result in the need for oral surgery. Early treatment, known as Phase 1 treatment, significantly reduces the likelihood of a tooth getting impacted.

Speech difficulty

Some speech impediments are caused by malocclusion (misalignment) of the teeth, which can be fixed by orthodontic treatment. In collaboration with speech therapy, this can have a profound impact on your child's self-confidence.

Overbite or underbite

This is when jaws are too far forward or backward. The jaws finish most of their growth by about age 14. Early treatment can help guide the jaw's position and address these bite issues.

Posterior cross-bite

This occurs when the top back teeth are closer to the tongue than the bottom teeth when biting together. If left untreated, this may contribute to the development of facial asymmetry.

Anterior open bite

When this occurs, top and bottom teeth in the front don't touch. This is often caused by thumb sucking or tongue thrusting habits.

Early loss of baby teeth

When this happens and the adult teeth aren't yet ready to come in, crowding is more likely to develop.

'Buck teeth' or a crooked tooth

While these conditions can sometimes wait to be treated in the teenage years, if they prevent your child from smiling or embarrass your child, a quick course of braces early on can make a big difference in appearance and self-esteem.

Asymmetrical face or irregular facial profile

In addition to a dramatic improvement in appearance, the psychological benefits achieved with timely orthodontic treatment are pronounced.

If early treatment isn't necessary, we will see your child every 6 months to one year to monitor development and begin treatment only when the time is right. These growth and development visits are always complimentary.



Kathy A.
Culver City

I took my daughter to see Dr. McComb last week. He and his staff are fantastic with kids! He is very knowledgeable and trustworthy...didn't try to offer any unneeded work.

View all of our reviews on [Yelp](#)



McComb Orthodontics will never charge for an initial consultation or follow-up visits to determine if or when braces are recommended.

What to Expect in Your Initial Consultation

Initial consultations with
McComb Orthodontics are
always free.



During the consultation you'll meet with Dr. McComb and our Treatment Coordinator, Stephanie Linzy, to discuss whether treatment is appropriate or not. If your child is ready for treatment, we'll discuss the plan, and we always reserve time to get your child started the same day if you'd like.

If your child isn't ready for treatment, we'll review what the growth and development/observation period entails and what we'll monitor in upcoming visits. These periodic reevaluations are complimentary as well, and typically occur in 6-month or annual intervals.

We enjoy educating our patients (parents and children alike) and discussing any questions you and your child



At your consultation:

- You and your child will meet our office team and have a one-on-one with Dr. McComb
- You'll complete dental and medical history forms (or we can send them to you in advance, if you prefer)
- Your child will receive a complete exam, with X-rays, to see if treatment is necessary

may have. In fact, how your child feels throughout this whole process matters as much as how you feel. At McComb Orthodontics, your child will be heard and cared for. This helps alleviate anxiety and makes your child feel more confident and happy about embarking on this new experience.

We'll also discuss costs (which will be fully inclusive), insurance options and flexible payment plans. McComb Orthodontics is in-network with more insurance plans than most orthodontists. In addition to offering affordable treatment fees, our team will work with you to create a payment plan that fits your budget. All in-house payment plans are completely interest-free. That means you'll have the opportunity to spread your payments out throughout or beyond your treatment, resulting in a low monthly fee at no added cost to you.

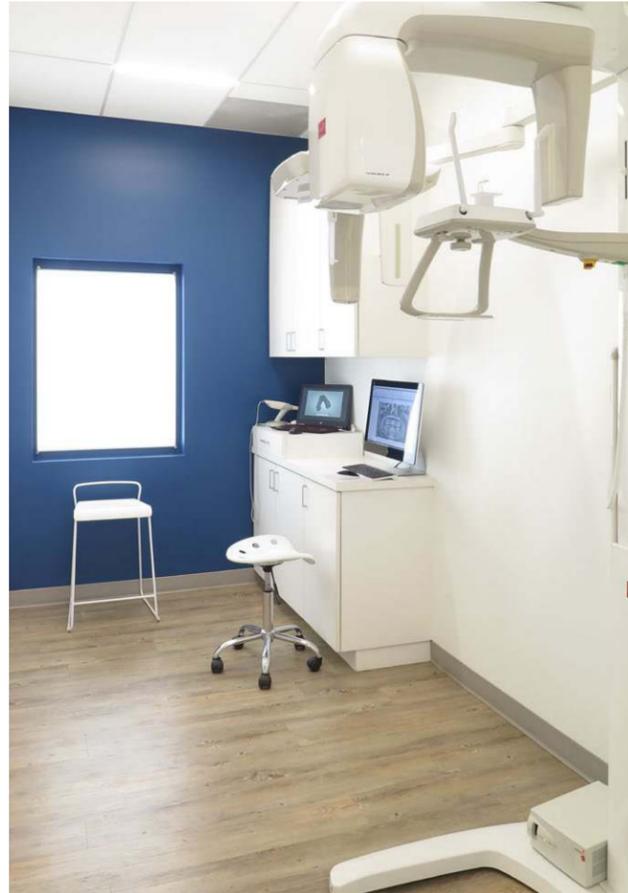


Patient Spotlight

One of our patients showed his enthusiasm for braces through his artistic creations, surprising us with Legos of "before" and "after" teeth, a toothbrush made of Legos, and even our logo made of Legos. You can see them in our office! We genuinely love getting to know our patients and their families. It's part of what makes our office a truly happy place to be.

Why Every Consultation Should Include Free X-Rays

Your entire consultation, including X-rays, is always complimentary at McComb Orthodontics, regardless of whether or not you have insurance.



Orthodontic X-rays reveal comprehensive information about jaw development and positioning of the emerging teeth that can't be seen just from a physical examination of the teeth or standard images taken with a camera. Combined with a clinical examination by the orthodontist, they provide the complete perspective necessary to create an accurate treatment plan. At McComb Orthodontics, we want to be able to advise anyone considering braces or other orthodontic options on the most appropriate, individu-

al treatment plan, so we will never charge for your consultation X-rays.

In case you're wondering, dentists don't take the same type of X-rays as orthodontists as part of standard dental care. Cephalometric and panoramic (or Ceph and Pano for short) X-rays are used by orthodontists to look into the bite and the growth pattern of the jaws and teeth, whereas dental X-rays usually focus on specific regions of the mouth.

Are the X-Rays Safe? What About Radiation?

We only use the latest digital X-ray technology at McComb Orthodontics, which emit the same amount of radiation as you get walking outside on a typical day in Los Angeles. We still use a lead apron for your extra peace of mind, but the exposure from X-rays we take is infinitesimal. That said, we don't want your child to have any more exposure than absolutely necessary, so if you'd like copies of the X-rays after your consultation, we will provide them to you at no cost. If you have any concerns, please don't hesitate to share them with us and we'd be happy to give you more information.



Phase 1, Phase 2, Comprehensive? What the Heck?

Let's break it down. First, the basics:

1. Phase 1 is early treatment, which starts anywhere between ages 6 and 10. About 1 in 5 children need it. Treatment for young children is usually preventative, to avoid an escalation of problems with jaw development or how teeth are growing in, minimizing the need for more drastic measures later.

2. Phase 2 or Comprehensive treatment typically takes place in the preteen/teen years, when the adult teeth are all in. It's called Phase 2 in cases where there was a Phase 1. It's called Comprehensive when the patient is only going through one

treatment period rather than phased treatment. "Comprehensive treatment" also applies to treatment for adults.

Now, the details:

Phase 1

We addressed the key criteria for Phase 1 treatment earlier in this report. Children's teeth and jaws are still growing and developing at this stage, so if major problems exist, we have a better opportunity to correct the problem before growth is complete. When early treatment is recommended, consider asking the following questions during your consultation, so you can make a fully informed decision:

- *What specific problems will you be addressing with Phase 1 treatment?*
- *If we decide not to do Phase 1 treatment, what are the potential long-term consequences?*
- *Will a second phase of treatment be necessary?*

Overall, Phase 1 is a great option if your child suffers from social anxiety about his/her teeth or has any dental or jaw issues that can be best addressed at an early age. Early treatment, which usually lasts about one year, reduces the complexity of the second phase of treatment, and may even allow your child to avoid tooth extraction or surgical pro-

Cosmetic changes to the teeth and facial structure can also have a profound impact on self-confidence and social acceptance

cedures in the future. Just keep in mind that a second phase of treatment a few years later when

Early treatment may allow your child to avoid tooth extraction or surgical procedures in the future

the adult teeth are in is almost always necessary to finalize the smile and make the bite fit together perfectly.

Phase 2 or Comprehensive

Since "Comprehensive treatment" is an appropriate term regardless of whether Phase 1 treatment occurred, we will use

that term for simplicity. Comprehensive treatment for your teenager includes either full braces or Invisalign. Early treatment, on the other hand, may only involve braces on some teeth rather than the full set. Braces can be metal or clear.

We most frequently recommend comprehensive treatment after all the permanent teeth come in, usually between ages 11-14. It is better and easier to get comprehensive treatment in the teen years than later, because the jaws and teeth are still developing and braces can positively affect jaw growth.

In terms of oral health, a bad bite and crooked teeth can con-

tribute to periodontal problems, tooth decay (cavities), irregular tooth wear and possibly even TMJ pain. Practically speaking, straight teeth are easier to keep clean. Comprehensive treatment with braces or Invisalign can improve the health of your teeth, gums and surrounding bone structure.

In terms of appearance, the cosmetic changes to the teeth and facial structure can also have a profound impact on self-confidence and social acceptance during the teen years and beyond.



Phase 1
Between ages 6 and 10



Phase 2
Preteen/Teen Years



When are Expanders a Good Idea?

Expanders are an important part of orthodontic treatment for many children and teens.



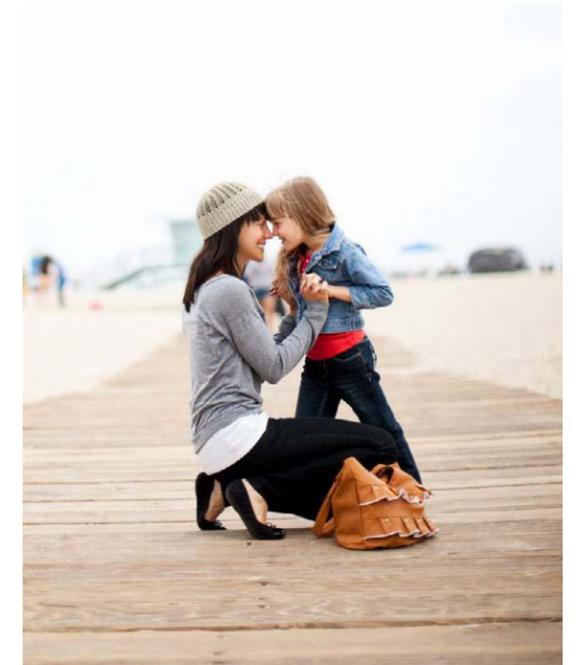
1. The most common indication for expansion is a posterior crossbite. A posterior crossbite occurs when the top back teeth (molars and premolars) bite down inside the bottom back teeth.
2. Another common reason for expansion is very crowded teeth, to make space for the permanent teeth. In particular, if the upper canines are not coming out in the proper position, expansion creates more space for their eruption.
3. In recent years, an increasing number of research studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of expansion in improving the airway in patients with restricted breathing.

Is expansion for the top or bottom teeth?

Expansion is most commonly performed in the upper arch, although many orthodontists will complement the upper expansion with an expander in the lower arch to optimize the bite.

A Wide Variety of Expanders

There are various types of expanders. Expanders are most commonly cemented on the molars, al-



though they're sometimes removable. In some cases, the patient, parent or someone else will be required to use a 'key' to turn the expander based on the doctor's instructions. Other expanders can be programmed by the orthodontist before being cemented in place and will gradually expand over the course of several weeks to months without turning.

What's the best time for expansion?

Expansion is easiest and most effective before the palatal bones have fully fused. This is typically between the ages of 7 and 15.

Overall, expansion is a great tool in orthodontics to help broaden the smile, create space for all of the adult teeth, and perhaps even improve the airway. Expansion is only indicated in select cases since many patients already have the ideal arch width. For parents out there researching orthodontics for their children, keep in mind that the best time to bring your child in for an initial orthodontic consultation is around the age of 7.



The Differences Between Metal Braces, Clear Braces and Invisalign

We've come a long way since the days of clunky metal braces. Modern braces are smaller, more comfortable and more attractive.

Traditional metal or clear braces begin working after the orthodontist gently places the brackets on the teeth. Then, a series of wires, ranging from very flexible in the beginning to more sturdy toward the end of treatment, are used to gradually align the teeth. Auxiliary appliances including rubber bands may also be used during the course of treatment to correct the bite (the way the top and bottom teeth fit together). Comprehensive treatment with braces typically takes 18-24 months.

Clear braces work the same way as metal braces, but using teeth-colored brackets to blend in more. The brackets are made of a ceramic composite that is less visible on your teeth, and clear bands are tied over the metal wire to keep it in place.

A common question we hear is whether braces hurt. Getting braces on doesn't hurt and in fact, it's pretty common for us to enjoy smiles and laughs with our patients while they're in and out of the chair (and at every visit, for that matter). However, there may be some soreness in the 1 to 2 days after getting braces. Typically discomfort is minor, and can be minimized by eating a soft diet for the first few days.



Clear Braces



It's pretty common for us to enjoy smiles and laughs with our patients while they're in and out of the chair

Invisalign is a treatment option using transparent, retainer-like aligners to straighten and shift teeth into place. Nearly invisible, Invisalign has become a popular option for adults and teens for its discreet appearance and for convenience, since the trays can be removed when eating and brushing teeth. The aligners are worn for at least 22 hours per day, and are replaced every 1-2 weeks by a new pair to continue shifting the teeth. The treatment typically takes 18-24 months like traditional braces.

Metal Braces



Clear Braces



Invisalign



Benefits of Indirect Bonding to Apply a Full Set of Braces

McComb Orthodontics uses a special method for applying full braces, called **Indirect Bonding**, to more accurately and efficiently place brackets on the teeth.

This takes more time upfront in the lab before the patient comes in, but saves about 30 minutes in the chair for our patients vs. the traditional application method for full braces. Also, more accurate placement can reduce the overall treatment time a bit (yes, getting the braces off sooner!). We love providing a better patient experience and creating more efficient results. Everybody wins.

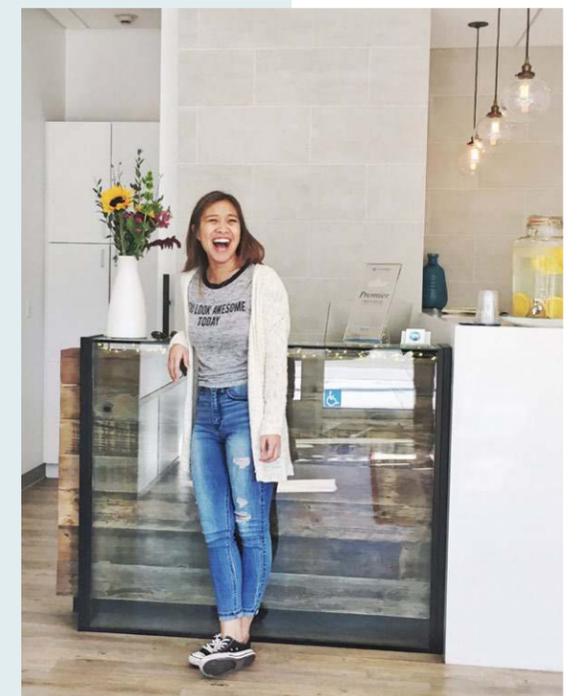
Rather than making your child sit with his/her mouth held open for a long period of time by having brackets cemented in place individually, McComb Orthodontics takes a full impression of the teeth during your child's first visit. Then, before he/she comes in for braces, Dr. McComb places the braces on each tooth of the impression, positioning them perfectly, and then creates a transfer tray that fits directly over the impression. When your child comes in to get braces, we slide the tray into his/her mouth, cement it in with ease, and voila, it's done!



McComb Orthodontics lessens patient time in the chair and total duration of Comprehensive treatment by using Indirect Bonding.

Working with an Orthodontist vs. a Dentist for Braces or Invisalign

Some dentists offer orthodontic services as well. Similar to a doctor who obtains additional schooling to become a surgeon, an orthodontist requires 3 years of additional schooling for their specialty. Orthodontists specialize in helping patients with the alignment of their teeth, improving their bite and overcrowding. While a dentist may offer to provide braces or Invisalign, orthodontists have the additional specialized education, training and experience that make them exceptionally well-suited for orthodontic care.



How Much Do Braces Cost?

When doing research on an item or service, one of the first things people usually want to know is the cost.

With healthcare, this is often difficult, if not impossible, given that every patient is unique and your needs will likely be different from the person who came before you. But let's be honest: For almost anything we can at least offer price ranges or averages to help prospective patients better prepare for the investment.

If you visit an orthodontic specialty office in Los Angeles, the cost for comprehensive treatment usually ranges from \$4300 on the low end to around \$6300 on the higher end. That said, you can definitely find advertised prices as low as \$3000 at some corporate dental offices. Keep in mind that these offices usually cram WAY more patients into the schedule in order to make a profit, resulting in very long wait times, crowded clinics, and oftentimes less than optimal treatment results. Many patients also

get caught up in tricky payment plans with these offices that end up costing a lot more money in the long run.

The most important thing to keep in mind is that almost all patients can afford treatment at specialty orthodontic offices, even if the price seems limiting at first glance. For example, let's say your comprehensive treatment estimate is \$5130 and you have insurance that will cover \$1500 of your treatment fee. If you put \$300 down when the braces go on, the balance will be \$3330 due over the course of your treatment. Many orthodontic offices are now offering in-house, interest free payment options that extend throughout or even beyond your treatment time. If you divide that \$3330 balance into 24 monthly payments, you'll owe about \$139/mo. If you stretch the payments out to 36 months, your payments could be as low as \$93/mo. And that's for top-notch treatment with a specialist!

While the cost for treatment will vary greatly based on your specific needs and the office you

visit, extended payment plans like the one mentioned above will keep the monthly cost low and ensure you have access to the best treatment available in a specialty orthodontic clinic. When going in for a consultation, be sure to confirm that the fees you're presented with are comprehensive and include all aspects of treatment, from initial records and monthly visits to your final records and post-treatment retainers.

At McComb Orthodontics, we believe in full transparency and any costs discussed will be all-inclusive. We don't throw in hidden fees or supplemental charges down the road. And in the event that you move during treatment, don't worry: Your records are yours, we won't charge you to send them to someone else, and you will only need to pay a prorated amount that corresponds to the amount of treatment your child has received.

When going in for a consultation, be sure to confirm that the fees you're presented with are comprehensive and include ALL aspects of treatment.



The McComb Orthodontics Team Loves Making People Smile



STEPHANIE LINZY
Treatment Coordinator

Stephanie was the first team member to join Dr. McComb and has since become one of the pillars of our office. Aside from making her specialty fruit detox water every morning for patients, she will be your guide from the very beginning. Stephanie is most likely the first person who will greet you when you arrive and will continue to guide you through the orthodontic journey, from discussing treatment fees to coordinating regular visits.

"My son is my world. I absolutely love being a mommy and wife. I'm originally from Seattle, WA and will be a Seahawks fan for life! I have an extensive sneaker collection, love to make people laugh and doing random acts of kindness."



KATIE ROGERS
Patient Care Coordinator

Katie recently moved to LA from Arkansas and has quickly become a key part of the McComb Ortho team. Even though she's not a morning person, she'll have a huge smile on her face when she takes your initial records and gets to know you during your consultation, even if it is the popular 7:00am slot. Oh, and she's also amazing at creating fun social media content!

"I recently moved from Arkansas to Los Angeles and I love it! I have an obsession with dogs, and have a corgi I love to take on hikes and to the dog park. I'm a huge bookworm and stay up past my bedtime almost every night reading a good book or BuzzFeed articles."



LISETTE CRUZ
Clinical Assistant

Born and raised in LA, Lisette knew she wanted to be an orthodontic assistant since she finished high school. In two short years, Lisette has grown into one of LA's best orthodontic assistants. She's incredibly sweet, hard-working, and a perfectionist... something we value here at McComb Orthodontics!

"My family is my biggest motivation in life. I love to stay active, whether it's playing soccer or spending time at the gym. I can talk movies and MMA all day! Oh and of course I love my dog Rey."



Meet the Doctor



DR. RYAN MCCOMB

He graduated from Harvard University with a Doctorate of Dental Medicine and went on to complete his Specialty Certificate in Orthodontics at UCLA.

Orthodontics is a passion of Ryan's. From simple treatments to advanced surgical procedures, his favorite part of practicing orthodontics is assessing an individual and forming a treatment plan.

With numerous awards and certifications, Dr. McComb has excelled in his orthodontic career. He has spent time with the American Dental Association's program Give Kids A Smile, providing dental services to underserved children. He has also contributed to the advancement of orthodontic research by developing new techniques to evalu-

ate 3D X-rays of the teeth and jaws.

Staying active and healthy is an important part of Ryan's life, and in his spare time, you can often find him surfing, playing beach volleyball, conversing about historical fiction novels and preparing Sunday brunch (not all at the same time).

Schedule a Consultation
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Our Commitment to You

With McComb Orthodontics, you and your child will never just feel like another patient.

We want to get to know you and make sure you have a fun, stress-free experience that leads to great smiles not only at the end of treatment, but throughout the process. We will give you and your children straight, thoughtful answers, and treat you like family – the kind that you like to have around!

Sincerely,
Dr. Ryan McComb



**Contact Us to
Schedule a Consultation**

(310) 299-8894

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